

MARCH 25, 1976

THE U.S. DEFENSE POSTURE AND FOREIGN POLICY

ANNCR: NEWS ANALYST FRED GALVAN DISCUSSES THE ROLE OF AMERICA'S DEFENSE POSTURE IN RELATION TO ITS FOREIGN POLICY--PARTICULARLY AS IT AFFECTS WASHINGTON'S MAJOR AIM OF RELAXING TENSIONS WITH MOSCOW.

VOICE: EVER SINCE WORLD WAR TWO, AMERICAN PRESIDENTS HAVE RECOGNIZED THAT A STRONG DEFENSE PROGRAM FOR AMERICA IS ESSENTIAL TO THE CREDIBILITY OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. THE FORD ADMINISTRATION IS NO DIFFERENT-- DESPITE CRITICISMS OF ITS DEFENSE PROGRAM FROM DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN RIVALS OF PRESIDENT FORD IN THIS ELECTION YEAR.

THIS DEDICATION TO A STRONG DEFENSE POLICY LINKED TO A FIRM, BELIEVEABLE FOREIGN POLICY WAS UNDERLINED MONDAY NIGHT IN DALLAS BY SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER. IN A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY ADDRESS, THE SECRETARY OF STATE DEVOTED PRACTICALLY THREE QUARTERS OF IT TO A DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING THE FORD ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICIES.

IN ESSENCE, THE KISSINGER SPEECH SOUGHT TO ACCOMPLISH TWO THINGS. FIRST, IT WAS AN EMPHATIC APPEAL FOR POPULAR SUPPORT FOR A NEW ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION. AND, SECOND, IT WAS A LUCID, REASONABLE CALL FOR A CONTINUATION OF WASHINGTON'S EFFORTS TO RELAX TENSIONS WITH MOSCOW-- BUT THROUGH A CREDIBLE, STRONG DEFENSE PROGRAM LINKED DIRECTLY TO A FIRM FOREIGN POLICY AIMED AT PROTECTING AMERICA'S ROLE AS A WORLD LEADER. AS SECRETARY KISSINGER EXPRESSED THIS FOR A GREAT AND RESPONSIBLE POWER, DIPLOMACY WITHOUT STRENGTH WOULD BE EMPTY." IF THE U.S. WERE WEAK," SAID DOCTOR KISSINGER, "WE COULD NOT NEGOTIATE; WE COULD ONLY HOPE OR ACCOMMODATE. IT IS THE CONFIDENCE OF STRENGTH," HE ADDED, "THAT

PERMITS US TO ACT WITH CONCILIATION AND RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP SHAPE A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD."

OTHER NATIONS--FRIENDS AND ADVERSARIES ALIKE-- MUST NOT, HE SAID, DOUBT " EITHER OUR STRENGTH OR OUR RESOLUTION." FOR SUCH DOUBTS CAN ONLY LEAD TO AMERICA'S ADVERSARIES TAKING DANGEROUS RISKS AND ITS ALLIES RESORTING TO POLITICAL SHIFTS AND RETREAT.

IN THIS CONTEXT OF THE CHALLENGES AMERICA'S NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS FACE, DOCTOR KISSINGER CITED SEVERAL REALITIES. FIRST, THE RECOGNITION OF THE GROWTH OF SOVIET MILITARY AND ECONOMIC POWER THAT HAS PRODUCED -- AS HE PUT IT-- " ESSENTIAL STRATEGIC EQUALITY." NEVERTHELESS, SECRETARY KISSINGER EMPHASIZED, THE UNITED STATES IS STILL THE MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD-- ECONOMICALLY AND MILITARILY. BUT IF AMERICA IS TO MAINTAIN THAT POSITION, IT MUST ADAPT ITS DEFENSE PROGRAMS TO DEAL WITH WHAT HE CALLED " THE UMBRELLA OF STRATEGIC EQUIVALENCE"-- AND THE TESTING AND PROBING THAT THIS EQUIVALENCE MAKES MORE LIKELY FROM AMERICA'S RIVALS FOR WORLD LEADERSHIP. AT THE SAME TIME, SECRETARY KISSINGER SAID, A STRONG DEFENSE DOES NOT NECESSARILY PRODUCE A STRONG FOREIGN POLICY. WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THAT, HE EMPHASIZED, IS THE UNITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN PURSUIT OF THEIR NATIONAL GOALS AND NATIONAL INTERESTS.

THE HEART OF HIS ARGUMENT CAME WHEN HE SAID: " THE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT WE HAVE TODAY IS THE PRODUCT OF DECISIONS TAKEN TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS AGO. EQUALLY," HE ADDED, " THE DECISIONS WE MAKE TODAY WILL DETERMINE OUR DEFENSE POSTURE IN THE EIGHTIES AND BEYOND. AND THE KIND OF FORCES WE HAVE WILL DETERMINE THE KIND OF DIPLOMACY WE ARE ABLE TO CONDUCT."

IN SUM, WHAT DOCTOR KISSINGER WAS SAYING COMES DOWN TO THIS: THAT AMERICA MUST CONTINUE TO SEEK A RELAXATION OF TENSIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION- BUT THROUGH A POLICY OF DIPLOMACY BACKED BY THE DETERMINATION OF ALL AMERICANS TO KEEP THEIR COUNTRY STRONG AS A CREDIBLE ADJUNCT TO THAT POLICY. IN THAT, THERE IS NO QUARREL BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND HIS POLITICAL RIVALS--THE DIFFERENCE ESSENTIALLY RESIDES IN THE EMPHASIS EACH GIVES TO THE ELEMENTS OF THAT POLICY.

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